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ABSTRACT

Several issues related to the implementation of vocational education programs for Hispanic Americans are investigated in this paper, material for which came from a review of literature on the subject, government documents, and interviews with public officials. Issues explored include: (1) The history and current status of vocational education programs with an emphasis on administrative factors, program results, and degree of Hispanic participation; (2) the relevance of vocational education programs for Hispanics, taking into account demographic and socioeconomic characteristics which influence the extent to which Hispanics utilize and benefit from such programs; (3) civil rights issues concerning vocational education and Hispanics; and (4) recommendations for changing vocational education policies to better meet the needs of the disadvantaged, specifically Hispanics. (Author/CMG)

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HISPANICS AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

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I. INTRODUCTION

Vocational education became an issue of national importance at the turn of the century, when immigration, industrialization, and increased numbers of poor and under-educated workers became a widespread concern. Since that time, periods of socio-economic crisis have triggered activities to expand vocational education programs.[1] As the Vocational Education Act comes before Congress for reauthorization, the question remains: is vocational education the hope for the future, or a negative tracking system for minorities and the poor, directing them into low-status, low-paying jobs?

Vocational education programs have been developed as one means of preparing individuals who are handicapped, disadvantaged, or of limited English-speaking ability for gainful employment. Recent evidence indicates that these programs fall short of achieving this objective. The rapid growth in the Hispanic population, which remains educationally and economically disadvantaged, emphasizes the need for a vocational education program which will ensure equitable educational opportunities for the nation's second largest minority.

This paper investigates several issues related to the implementation of vocational education programs for Hispanics. These issues include:

- The history and current status of vocational education programs with an emphasis on administrative factors, program results, and degree of Hispanic participation;
- The relevance of vocational education programs for Hispanics, taking into account the demographic characteristics which influence the extent to which Hispanics utilize and benefit from such programs;
- Civil rights issues concerning vocational education and Hispanics; and

- Recommendations for changing vocational education policies to better meet the needs of the disadvantaged, specifically Hispanics.

Material for this paper was obtained through a review of the literature, examination of specific government documents, and interviews with public officials. Reports issued by the National Institute of Education (NIE), the State of California, and the California State Advisory Committee on Vocational Education were reviewed in addition to studies prepared by individual vocational education experts. Department of Education records were reviewed to acquire information on federal vocational education regulations. Finally, information was obtained from state officals who work in the community college system and in areas related to career development, vocational, adult, and bilingual education.

II. HISTORY OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

A. Beginnings of Vocational Education in the U.S.

Vocational education had its beginnings in the United States early in the nineteenth century. Pressure for federal involvement dates from the 1930s, when Jonathan Baldwin Turner established a college in Illinois that became a prototype for the land-grant movement. Justin Morrill, a Whig member of Congress, spearheaded a movement that resulted in the First Morrill Act of 1862, which contributed lands to the states to establish:

> ...at least one college where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanical arts, in such manner as the legislatures of the states may respectively prescribe, in order to promote the

liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life.

This was a major departure from the traditional classical higher education that was considered necessary to prepare young American "gentlemen" for their roles in life. The Second Morrill Act in 1890 provided regular appropriations for the support of the land-grant colleges, which by then existed in every state, and the Smith-Lever Act in 1914 made the land-grant program permanent.

Support for vocational education reached its peak during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as a response to rapid industrialization, large-scale immigration (especially from Eastern Europe), the northward migration of Blacks, and the proliferation of higher educational institutions and professional associations. Proponents argued for vocational education opportunities outside the college system.

The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 was the first legislation that specifically addressed vocational education. Its passage came as a result of intensive lobbying by the American Vocational Association (AVA). The Act allocated money for teacher training and salaries in the fields of agriculture and industry.

The first major national evaluation of vocational education was commissioned nearly two decades later by President D. Franklin Roosevelt. Published in 1938 by the Advisory Committee on Education, the Russell Report revealed major gaps and weaknesses in available vocational education information regarding funding policies and procedures, the kinds of services provided, the students being served, and the results of student participation in the program. Existing legislation was described as narrow

and inflexible, and vocational education was viewed as fostering a dual system of education. Congress appropriated additional funds for vocational education, however, in spite of condemnation from the President.2

B. Vocational Education in the 1960s

President John F. Kennedy believed that federal funds should serve as a catalyst for improving education programs for a society undergoing social, economic, and political changes. He believed that employment and training programs should meet the educational needs of the poor as well as serve the labor needs of a society that had fallen behind the Russians in technological development.3

The Consultants on Vocational Education (CUE), a panel established during the Kennedy Administration to evaluate the vocational education system, conducted a review which substantiated the conclusions reached 25 years earlier in the Russell Report. The review concluded that the educational system loged 50 years behind the realities of the labor market, and questioned the efficacy of vocational programs. However, the panel recommended that Congress provide further federal support to assure that youth were properly prepared for work. There was an increasing emphasis on work experience and on-the-job training to resolve unemployment issues, as shown by the passage of several pieces of legislation: the Area Redevelopment Act, the Trade Expansion Act and the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA), in 1962. In 1963, vocational education legislation was reduced from providing teacher salaries and training, to address the needs of the disadvantaged, through the Vocational Education Act.

The legislation was to ensure that:

> All persons, in all communities of the state, those in high school, those who have completed or discontinued their formal education and are preparing to enter the labor market, those who have already entered the labor market, but need to upgrade their skills or learn new ones, those with special educational handicaps, and those in post-secondary schools, will have ready access to vocational training or retraining which is of high quality, which is realistic in the light of actual or anticipated opportunities for gainful employment, and which is suited to their needs, interests, and ability to benefit from such training. (Sec. 101)

The Act also extended services to adults, created post-secondary vocational programs, and required states to justify the use of all vocational education funds (prior to 1963, states were required only to report the use of federal funds). The legislation emphasized the importance of additional instruction in subjects related to the occupation for which the student is being trained.

Vocational education also became a part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty" when the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) was established under the auspices of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Several employment and training programs were initiated as well as the Adult Basic Education Program; the Job Corps, a residential program; and the Neighborhood Youth Corps, a non-residential program. Skills training and work experience were emphasized, with little attention to job matching or job creation.[4]

During this period of increased support for vocational education, the General Accounting Office (GAO) published a controversial study which

charged that minorities were not equitably served by vocational education programs, and questioned policies such as: 1) funding allocations, 2) the failure of states to serve the communities most in need, and 3) state requirements for recipient agencies. The report also found that vocational education programs provided training without considering existing labor market conditions. Congress found that vocational education had an inadequate planning process and that insufficient data were available.

Amendments to the Vocational Education Act in 1968 addressed the problems identified in the GAO report. A consolidated grant program with the following specifications was created:

1. A set-aside of 15% of state program funds for persons with academic and socio-economic handicaps;
2. A set-aside of 10% for programs targeted to those with physical or emotional handicaps;
3. A set-aside of 33% of each state's separate allocation for consumer and homemaking education programs in economically depressed areas; and
4. Continuation of specialized programs set up in 1960 for residential schools and work study programs in areas with high drop-out or youth unemployment rates. Disadvantaged youth were targeted in the experimental and research aspects of the legislation.

Thus by the late 1960's, vocational education as a concept had been made a part of employment and training legislation, and the Vocational Education Act itself included provisions designed to assure targeting on depressed areas and disadvantaged persons.

C. Vocational Education in the 1970s

1. Civil Rights Issues

Vocational education became a major civil rights issue during the 1970s. As a result of an extensive court case (Adams v. Richardson) in 1971, the judicial branch of government became involved in vocational education and mandated substantive changes in the role of the federal government.

The case was initiated by the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, based on the Civil Rights Act of 1964, against the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) for its failure to serve minorities and end educational desegregation in the Southern and border states. The representatives of handicapped and women's groups joined the NAACP in support of the suit.

In 1973 the Washington D.C., District Court ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, determining that the Department had failed to enforce Title VI of the Civil Rights Act in elementary and secondary schools in 17 Southern and border states. When the Department failed to comply with the remedies, the plaintiffs returned to court and the case was expanded to include all 50 states under Brown v. Weinberger.

The Adams remedies delegated the responsibility of assuring state compliance with federal regulations to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) of HEW (later the Department of Education). Following legislative directives, the Department issued guidelines for eliminating discrimination, initiated two data collection programs and began to train the states regarding their responsibilities.

In the midst of the legal controversy, Congress once again amended the Vocational Education Act in 1976 to clarify its purpose and assure a more cohesive program. For the first time, Congress addressed the importance of assessing vocational education services to the limited English proficient (LEP) community. This action had important implications for Hispanics. The Amendments also addressed the importance of alleviating sex bias, increasing experimental programs, and strengthening the enforcement of federal regulations at the state level. Stringent planning requirements for the use of state, local, and federal monies were included to accomplish this. The National Institute of Education later reported that "the changes represented an affirmation of trust in the federal government's ability to affect the substantive nature of programs through process planning and education requirements."[5] Using the planning process as a method for resolving the ills of program implementation remained the focus of the federal role in vocational education.

2. The National Institute of Education Study

The 1976 Amendments of the Vocational Education Act included a five year appropriation of $2 million a year to the National Institute of Education to review the vocational education system in the U.S. Four studies were scheduled for completion by the end of 1981:

1. The distribution of vocational education funds;
2. The extent of compliance with applicable laws;
3. An analysis of evaluation methods; and
4. An analysis of the non-occupational subpart -- consumer and homemaking education.

Although limited English proficient persons compose a large percentage of potential vocational education clients, neither NIE or the contracting

agencies focused on this important subgroup. The NIE Report to Congress bypassed this population entirely. Fundings from the study were not issued until 1981.

3. HEW Guidelines

In 1979, eight years after the initial Adams suit, HEW issued the Vocational Education Program Guidelines for Eliminating Discrimination and Denial of Services on the Basis of Race, Color, National Origin, Sex and Handicap. The guidelines covered the following types of discrimination:

1. Denial of vocational education opportunities on the basis of race, color, national origin, handicap through established geographic or eligibility requirements, location or admissions test;

2. Denial of equal access for handicapped persons by (a) assignment of separate facilities or branches; (b) inaccessible facilities; or (c) inadequate evaluation procedures;

3. Continued segregation of schools traditionally established for members of a particular race, national origin, or sex;

4. Denial of equal opportunity to persons of limited English proficiency;

5. Discrimination in student employment placement;

6. Assignment of staff and faculty on the basis of race, sex, national origin, color or handicap; and

7. Discrimination in the allocation of funds.[6]

Section II of the guidelines specified the civil rights responsibilities of state agencies. They were to prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex or handicap by:

1. Establishing criteria for distribution of federal or state funds to vocational education programs;

2. Establishing requirements for admission to, and administration of vocational education programs;

3. Establishing procedures for approval of action by local entities (subrecipients) providing vocational education; and

4. Establishing procedures for the states to use in the conduct of their own programs.

Other sections outlined the collection and analysis of civil rights related data, the performance of periodic compliance reviews, and the provision of technical assistance to subrecipients. States were required to submit periodic reports on program activities and findings to the Office of Civil Rights. In addition, a Methods of Administration (MOA) report was to be submitted by each state within one year which outlined methods of administering these orders and assuring compliance with federal guidelines. MOAs were a key factor in meeting the requirements of the Adams court order.

Those who commented on the draft regulations offered many negative responses. Some said that the guidelines were so vague as to be incomprehensible. Many states regarded the guidelines as assumption by the federal government of a "policing" role, and indicated it was unfair to expect them to assume civil rights responsibilities without receiving any financial assistance. Some complained that it was impossible for state agencies to give funds with one hand and require compliance with the other. The federal government faced a problem in establishing functional procedures given the variety of state jurisdictions and the lack of administrative uniformity. A second memorandum was issued to clarify the first, but confusion persisted.

During the 1970s, the federal government thus made serious attempts to develop strategies that would advance the concerns of disadvantaged populations, but the pace of enforcement was very slow. Concern for limited

English proficient individuals was largely lost in the mire of issues. LEPs are mentioned in the Adams remedies, guidelines and 1976 Amendments to the Vocational Education Act, but with limited effect on vocational education participation rates.

III. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TODAY

A. Current Status

The current size, structure, and status of vocational education in the United States are described below.

1. Program Size and Goals

In terms of size and established goals, the vocational education system in the United States is impressive. Vocational education is offered in over 14,000 school districts as well as at the post-secondary level, and may be found within specialized and comprehensive high schools, public and proprietary schools licensed by the states, and state-operated education facilities. Vocational education is provided in more than 20,000 secondary and post-secondary Area Vocational Education Schools (AVES).7

Although vocational education is administered by state and local agencies, programs are shaped by federal policies and share the same organizational goals established by federal law:

> ...administering educational programs...directly related to the preparation of individuals for paid or unpaid employment, or additional preparation for a career requiring certification other than a baccalaureate or an advanced degree.8

Vocational education programs fall into eight categories: (1) consumer and homemaking, (2) agriculture, (3) distribution, (4) health, (5) occupational home economics, (6) business and office, (7) technical, and (8) trade and industry. However, programs vary greatly at the state and local levels depending on levels, priority and administrative structures.

- More than 17 million students are enrolled in federally-funded courses or study programs;
- Seven of the 17 million mentioned above are enrolled in occupational-specific vocational programs; and
- Three-fifths of these seven million are in high school programs while two-fifths are in post-secondary or adult programs.9

Figures published by the American Vocational Association indicate the following:

- The rate of student enrollment in vocational education programs exceeds the rate of enrollment in college academic programs;
- Nearly half (47%) of all high school students and 30% of all community college students are enrolled in vocational education;
- Cooperative and work-study programs are strengthening the relationship between education and industry, and nearly 650,000 students are presently involved in these programs;
- Eighty-four percent of the $2 billion spent each year on vocational education programs are state and local funds; and
- During the past decade, vocational education expenditures for construction and instructional equipment totalled $1.6 billion.10

2. Administration

Vocational education programs are administered primarily by state and local governments. The relationship between federal and state government is

summarized in the following excerpt from the NIE report:

> Federal law established funding allocations and state programs planning and evaluation requirements. U.S.O.E. is responsible for administering the law, issuing program regulations and dealing directly with the states, but not with Local Education Agencies (LEAs). The states give operational meaning to federal regulations and add supplemental program requirements of their own. They approve local programs, enforce federal and state regulations, and provide technical assistance.11

The administrative structure of these programs varies by state, as does the planning process. The relationship among these agencies and their roles in determining the direction of vocational education is, at best, unclear and inconsistent.

3. Funding

While 90% of vocational education resources are non-federal, the federal subsidy remains substantial. Federal appropriations for vocational education were $681.6 million in FY 1979 and $784 million in FY 1980. The complex nature of federal funding for vocational education is described below:

> Vocational education funding procedures are as complicated as their organization and structure. HEW funds flow to programs under the Education Amendments of 1976 (P.L. 94-482). This source alone, however, provides only a part of the total HEW money flowing to vocational education programs. HEW money also reaches vocational programs through such diverse statutes as the Education of Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-142) and Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-10). These funds augment state and local funds, CETA grants and revenue sharing funds.12

The amount of state and federal support for educational programs varies from state to state. In some cases, state support is greater than federal, and in others, the reverse is true. In FY 1980, state and local education agencies contributed an average of $9 for each federal dollar appropriated to

vocational education, far in excess of the required one-for-one match. The FY 1980 federal allocation was appropriated as follows:

1. Funds Disseminated through States:

   - Basic State Grants under Subpart 2 - $562 million (72% of total);
   - Program Improvement and Supportive Services under Subpart 3 - $124.2 million;
   - Special Programs for the Disadvantaged under Subpart [illegible] 20 million;
   - Consumer and Homemaking Education - $43.5 million;
   - State Planning Grants - $5 million; and
   - State Advisory Council funds - $6.5 million;

2. Funds Allocated Directly by the Department of Education:

   - Discretionary Grants and Contracts - $10 million;
   - Bilingual Vocational Training - $4.8 million; and
   - Permanent Appropriations - $7 million.

In the Report to Congress, NIE listed several problems concerning the distribution of vocational education monies:

- Distribution "appears to be random" rather than systematic, and occurs without consideration being given to the fiscal capacity or the financial needs of a given state or territory.
- Criteria for funding are intermingled with applicant approval priorities. All of these are ambiguous, lack clarity, and are at times faulty.
- States have actually established their own priorities, their own funding procedures, their own interpretation of demographic data, their own economic focus -- whether or not these advance federal objectives.
- Funds channeled to impact areas lacking resources in 1979 had marginal effects.

- Federal funds are expected to accomplish major achievements, yet they are "too limited to help states with realizing federal objectives."[13]

4. The Federal-State Service Structure

Coordinating an effective federal and state effort to assure improved vocational education programming has proved difficult. Many critics have questioned the increasing role of the federal government, while others believe federal guidance has been insufficient. To receive federal funds, each state must currently maintain on file a general application including 12 assurances regarding fiscal and administrative capabilities. States in turn distribute funds to local areas, giving priority to: (1) economically distressed areas with high unemployment, which cannot meet vocational needs without federal assistance, and (2) proposed programs which are new and meet the area's specific manpower needs. In addition, states consider a subrecipient's relative financial ability to provide needed services, and the relative concentration of low-income populations within the agency's service area.

Problems have arisen with the federal-state delivery system. Gordon Swanson, in Youth Unemployment: Solving the Problem, sheds light on the difficulty of formulating and enforcing vocational education legislation:

> Legislation governing a complex set of problems such as those embraced by vocational education cannot be expected to have much conceptual orderliness. Legislation is, after all, an activity involving coalitions and compromises surrounding multiple purposes. It requires administration and decision-making responsibility distributed throughout the multiple bureaucracies at various levels of government.

States have resisted some of the federal regulations, paperwork, and compliance efforts which they consider burdensome. NIE research found that federal objectives had been "imperfectly advanced" partly because of a very long list of priorities, NIE also found that state and local agencies have experienced difficulties due to:

- The recordkeeping burdens of special cost requirements contained in the special needs categories;
- State and local inability or reluctance to find matching funds for the set-asides (disadvantaged, handicapped, etc.) required by law;
- States' preference to maintain special needs students in regular classes. They complain that there are too many "excess costs" associated with establishing special programs that are separate. However, separate programs are easier to account for in the record-keeping procedures.

A further compilication is that states are allowed to use federal monies for matching purposes, but regulations to authorize such actions have never been established.[14]

A variety of factors create problems at the state and local levels, including different interpretations of the law, conflicting priorities, divergent policy directives, as well as the lack of clarity in the legislation. Any action which appears to threaten state and local autonomy has been controversial, making it difficult for federal officials to provide consistent direction, technical assistance, and systematic evaluation.

B. <u>The Issues</u>

Vocational education has generated controversy for nearly 150 years. A review of existing literature reveals continued heated debate on the subject. A number of current studies criticize the vocational education system, charging that programs are generally static and outmoded, and that they:

- Fail to serve a broad-based population;
- Create a tracking system that perpetuates the disadvantaged status of minorities and the poor;
- Fail to prepare students for life in a rapidly changing, highly technical society, due to outdated curricula, educational methodology and equipment;
- Lack strong ties with industry and other employers in the current job market;
- Fail to place participants in higher positions and at higher salary rates than high school students who do not receive such training; and
- Fail to maintain adequate records and collect needed data.

These criticisms have been raised by a number of studies, including the NIE Vocational Education Study, which was issued in 1981; a report issued by the Carnegie Corporation in 1979; a report by Grasso and Shea on Vocational Education and Training: Impact on Youth, issued in 1979; and the reports commissioned by Presidents Roosevelt and Kennedy. Most frequently repeated are concerns that the training is too conservative, fails to adapt to changes in technology and labor market needs, and thus offers outdated training with old-fashioned equipment for jobs which no longer exist. Critics have also claimed that employers actually look for basic skills when they are hiring, preferring to provide training on the job or in employer-sponsored programs using the same equipment encountered on the job.

Proponents support vocational education on the basis that programs help youth stay in school, lead to improved job placement and salaries, and provide better educational services to disadvantaged students than regular educational programs. A number of reports, some done by individual states including Ohio and New York, support these claims.[15]

The appropriate role of the federal government in supporting and in helping to shape vocational education programs is a controversy which remains central to the vocational education controversy.

IV. PROFILE OF HISPANIC AMERICANS

Vocational education is potentially a major means of upward mobility for Hispanic Americans. Socio-economic data on Hispanics portrays a young, fast-growing population that is characterized by low levels of income and educational attainment, high unemployment, and a predominately blue collar, minimally skilled workforce that is concentrated in entry-level, operative and service occupations. The following data describes these characteristics:[15]

A. Demographic Information

- An estimated 15 to 19 million Hispanics live in the United States (the 1980 Census counted 1.6 million). Nine million, or 60%, of these Hispanics are of Mexican origin. Over two million, or 15%, are of Puerto Rican origin (excluding those on the island).
- Over 80% of the Hispanic population is concentrated in nine states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, and Texas. Over 70% of all Hispanic Americans live in four of these states: California, Texas, New York and Florida.
- Hispanics are young; over 40% are under 18 years of age. The median age of the Hispanic community is 22 years.
- The total U.S. population grew by about 10% in the 1970s, while the Hispanic community grew by about 65%.
- Hispanics are the fastest growing minority in the nation due to immigration, high birth rates, and the fact that 53% of Hispanic families have four or more members.
- The large majority (85%) of Hispanics live in metropolitan areas, with over half (51%) living in central cities.

B. Labor Force Participation

- Hispanics comprise 5% of the total U.S. labor force. A total of 4.4 million are employed in low-paying, entry-level jobs. Nearly 50% are blue-collar workers, predominately operatives and service workers. Only 33% hold white-collar positions, of which a majority are clerical workers. The Cuban subpopulation holds the highest proportion of high-status jobs; professionals of Cuban heritage number three times the Mexican American professional work force;

- Almost half (46%) of the Hispanic youth population in the labor force are in blue-collar positions -- 17% are service workers and 6% are farm laborers. In contrast, 41% of White youth are blue-collar workers, 13% are service workers, and 3% are farm laborers;

- Hispanic youth suffer from chronic unemployment. Although youth aged 16-24 comprise only 26% of the total Hispanic labor force, they account for 45% of all unemployed Hispanics. In 1978, the labor force participation rate of Hispanic dropouts aged 16-24 years was 69% compared to 81% for Hispanic high school graduates. A large percentage of dropouts are not in the labor force; and

- Language is a critical factor in Hispanic unemployment. In 1975, over 4.8 million Hispanics used Spanish as their dominant language; 54% of those indicated a difficulty communicating in English.

C. Income

- The median income of Hispanic families in 1980 was $12,953 compared with $19,116 for the general U.S. population;

- Over one-fourth (24%) of all Hispanic families in 1980 had incomes below the poverty level. This is two and one-half times the percentage (9%) of all U.S. families with incomes below the poverty level;

- According to a state-sponsored study of young Puerto Ricans in New York, income improves with the acquisition of more formal education, but income levels are still far below those of majority men. A comparison between the total population and Puerto Rican male income reveals a 30% differential for high school graduates and a 50% differential for college graduates. Puerto Rican males with a college education have incomes only slightly higher than high school graduates in the total population; and

- In 1975, Mexican American males 25-29 years old with four or more years of college earned only 71% of the average income for White males with the same educational attainment. Mexican American females earned only 46% of White male average salary levels.

In response to such findings, The Vice President's Task Force On Youth Unemployment concluded that "the effects of discrimination in the youth labor market are especially apparent when unemployment rates and income levels are compared with equal educational attainment and accomplishment.17

D. Education

- In 1980, 43% of the Hispanic population over 25 years of age had completed high school or more. In 1977, 56% of Hispanics between the ages of 18 and 34 were high school graduates compared to nearly 84% of Whites.
- In 1977, 59% of Hispanic youth, aged 18-19 were not enrolled in school, and of this group, 33% had not completed high school; 36% of Hispanic youth, aged 20-21, had not completed high school;
- Math and reading scores for Hispanic 17 year olds in 1977 were 18 and 14 percentage points below White scores, respectively;
- Hispanics who do go on to college tend to enter terminal two-year programs, with a high percentage enrolling in vocational programs.

Although there is insufficient research exploring the factors associated with Hispanic youth employment, there does appear to be a strong causal relationship between Hispanic youth unemployment and inadequate educational attainment.

E. Barriers to Advancement

Studies reveal that discrimination in the labor market and in the allocation of vocational education funds appears to be another important element associated with unemployment and the lack of training opportunities for Hispanic youth. Employment and training programs are most often located

where minorities are not. In addition, the quality of education and training programs in central cities is often low, partly due to a lack of adequate resources.

Middle and upper class youth have the benefits of better resources and the kind of preparation that prepares them better for the current labor market.[18] In addition, their parents have developed networks and professional contacts which are often instrumental in getting youth their first jobs. The children have role models and the kind of support which prepares them for the role expectations of the adult professional worker.[19]

In contrast, the typical disadvantaged youth has neither successful role models or the network of support that is found among more advantaged youth. In addition, the proportion of Hispanics isolated in segregated schools rose from 65% to 72% between 1970 and 1976. Cultural and language differences contribute to discrimination, and help keep Hispanics out of vocational education programs.

A review of current employment and labor market data not only shows an urgent need for educational programs which can better address the problems of Hispanic and other minority youth, but also reflects major changes in the American labor market. The major premise of the American dream — that hard work will lead to prosperity and social equality -- is now in question. Morale is often low in the workforce and among those who are about to enter it.[20] The unequal distribution of educational resources, a major barrier to greater job opportunities for Hispanics and all minorities, means that fewer people are escaping poverty through education. Some poverty has become "endemic, built into the fabric of nation."[21]

Equal opportunity has undergone a great conceptual change during the past few decades. At the turn of the century, the court case, Plessy v. Ferguson, decreed that separate but equal facilities were constitutional. After the Brown decision in 1956, "separate but equal" was declared unconstitutional. Desegregation, however, also posed problems as reports indicated that mixing people of different racial, ethnic or socio-economic origins often did not improve social equality.[22]

Dr. Earl Pullias, Professor Emeritus at the University of Southern California, wrote of the misleading concept of equal opportunity:

> Opportunity is a complex thing...with profound psychological and spiritual dimensions. There is much more to opportunity than physical availability, as important as that opportunity is. The person must be aware that the opportunity is available to him or her, as an individual.[23]

Today, educators speak not only of "equity of opportunity," but also of "equity of outcome," which has come to imply a need to look at each student's individual needs and utilize the best educational practices for that particular person.[24]

There are conflicting theories regarding the role of education in improving the socio-economic status of the disadvantaged. Many sociologists and educators still support the concept that schools are the prime socializing force in the nation and that their purpose is to "sort and select" tomorrow's leaders and prepare students for their adult roles. Others write that schools establish a "class of failures" at an early age, that changes little through time.[25] The lack of equal opportunity is ascribed to a variety of factors, including the inequitable distribution of educational resources, the home environment, and even genetic differences.

These are only theories. The challenge to develop a comprehensive educational program that serves the needs of the disadvantaged remains a major unfulfilled national goal. From the viewpoint of Hispanic youth, vocational education is a part of that unmet challenge.

V. HISPANIC ENROLLMENT IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

A. Overview

The limited data available on the patterns of Hispanic participation in vocational education not only demonstrates the underrepresentation of Hispanics in these programs, but also provide evidence of a dual tracking among participants.

According to available data from 1978-79, compiled by the Hispanic Higher Education Coalition, Hispanics are not found to participate in employment development programs to any large extent. Most eligible Hispanics are not receiving assistance.[26] The data also confirms previous studies which show that vocational education had fostered ability grouping, questionable testing procedures, and a guidance counseling process which tracks students at an early age into differential career programs. Grubb describes this dual system of education:

> ...with lower class and minority boys tracked into low status vocational education programs; lower class and minority girls tracked into traditional female occupations, and middle and upper class students of both sexes placed in academic programs.[27]

In 1978-79, vocational education enrollment totalled about 19.5 million. Secondary and post-secondary enrollment accounted for 65% and 35%,

respectively. Public comprehensive and vocational high schools provided over 50% of the total number of programs offered; there were 15,729 schools in this category.

According to the 1979 Office of Civil Rights preliminary survey, Hispanic enrollment composed:

- Almost 6% (489,312) of the total enrollment;
- A little over 6% of the number in comprehensive high schools;
- About 4% of those in area vocational centers; and
- Almost 7% of those in junior colleges.

Since Hispanics constitute at least 6.4% of the U.S. population and a considerably larger proportion of the school age population, they are underrepresented at all these levels -- even though Hispanics tend to be directed into vocational rather than academic tracks.

B. Vocational Concentrations

The highest concentration of Hispanics in vocational programs as of 1979 was found in consumer homemaking, occupational home economics, and business and office occupational categories, with Hispanics representing 5.5%. 6.4%, and 6.6% of the totals, respectively. Health, agriculture and technical programs had the smallest percentage of Hispanics. Enrollment in these areas was typically in lower quality programs that involved entry level skills as oppossed to high quality programs with advanced training. Hispanic underrepresentation and overrepresentation in selected programs is shown below:

TABLE 1

VOCATIONAL PROGRAM PARTICIPATION BY HISPANICS

Underrepresentation		Overrepresentation	
Masonry	1.9%	Dental Hygiene	27.7%
Medical Emergency Tech.	3.8%	Medical Lab. Assist.	21.4%
Finance and Credit	4.4%	Upholstering	13.7%
Appliance Repair	3.9%	Communications/Photography	13.9%
Agriculture Production	2.9%	Materials, Supplies	14.5%
Electricity	3.8%	Filing, General Office	9.1%

C. Hispanic Enrollment in Other Vocational Programs

In addition to providing classroom training, vocational programs offer work programs which include apprenticeship, cooperative and work study programs. Hispanic participation in these programs as of 1979 is shown in Table 2, attached.

Women constituted 52% of those enrolled in vocational education programs, and 6% were Hispanic females. Distribution by program area revealed that Hispanic women were concentrated in occupational home economics and office occupations (approximately 5% of the enrollees of each type of program), out of 82% and 73% overall female enrollment in these areas. Table 3, attached, shows the percentage of Hispanic and total female enrollment in each program area.

TABLE 2

HISPANIC PARTICIPATION IN
VOCATIONAL WORK PROGRAMS

	Total % Hispanic Enroll	Apprentice Programs	Coop Voc. Ed.	Work Study
Comprehensive High School	6.25%	6.13%	5.99%	7.37%
Area Vocational Center	4.06%	2.87%	2.18%	3.76%
Junior College	6.09%	7.08%	6.74%	6.33%

TABLE 3

FEMALE ENROLLMENTS

Program	% Hispanic Female	% Total Female
Agriculture	0.7%	19.4%
Distribution	2.9%	54.0%
Health	3.5%	83.9%
Consumer and Homemaking	4.3%	78.5%
Occupational Home Economics	5.1%	81.7%
Office Occupations	5.0%	73.0%
Technical	1.0%	19.8%
Trade and Industrial	1.2%	17.5%

D. Factors Affecting Hispanic Underrepresentation

These findings support the conclusion reached by Jeanne Lopez-Valadez in a report for the Department of Education:

> Despite the fact that Hispanics have traditionally been tracked into vocational and non-college bound programs, there is a surprising underrepresentation of Hispanics in vocational education programs, in particular at the post-secondary level...the low level of participation by Hispanics can be attributed to the lack of four major elements: access, counseling, programmatic coordination and financial aid. Districts with predominantly Hispanic populations lack good, modern vocational programs.[28]

A number of other researchers have discussed the inadequacies of educational programs in which Hispanics have participated. Mary McGroarty of Stanford University has reported a "pattern of minimal results from federal spending" for Hispanics. McGroarty and Grubb found that the graduates of vocational education programs are rarely placed in jobs for which they are trained. Lopez and McGroarty identified the following patterns of low quality educational services for Hispanics:

- Programs for limited English proficiency persons are too few and too scattered. Funds are limited and an unhealthy political climate has resulted from groups competing for these funds;
- Many other federally funded educational programs assume "they are off the hook" because of the existence of a minor bilingual vocational training program;
- Many limited English proficient (LEP) students also need basic skills courses which are rarely available;
- Programs do not exist which could direct students towards more lucrative positions that require bilingual skills;
- Programs put all LEP students together in one classroom, regardless of interest, level of education, English proficiency, sophistication, etc., though no other educational programs fail to consider these variables;

- Many programs have staff who are not trained to work with LEPs; students are often placed in crowded classrooms with teachers and counselors who cannot communicate with them; and

- Evidence shows that the competition for entry-level jobs is increasing, and as more women and youth enter the job market, Hispanics are being pushed out.

NIE findings indicate that federal funds are beginning to reach the disadvantaged. Information gathered for this study shows evidence to the contrary. There is little correlation between existing regulations and Hispanic participation in vocational education programs. The barriers to participation are such that Hispanics feel "invisible." In order to better understand those barriers, the following section identifies key issues related to Hispanic participation and considers aspects of the legislation and regulations that would assure greater enrollment.

VI. IMPROVING HISPANIC PARTICIPATION IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

A. Overview

The 1976 Amendments to the Vocational Education Act were a major advance in recognizing the special needs of certain disadvantaged populations. However, the implementing regulations have failed to safeguard these groups. The stated purpose of the regulations was to:

> ... assist states to improve planning in the use of all resources for vocational education and overcome sex discrimination in vocational education. The regulations also permit consolidation of programs to provide greater flexibility to the states in conducting vocational education programs.

Implementation of the regulations, however, have failed to safeguard the needs of these groups. The emphasis has been on planning and process rather than on content and outcomes. Of all the neglected populations listed in the

Adams case and OCR data, only sex discrimination is mentioned; there is no reference to a commitment to "overcoming the bias towards the LEP population. In spite of the court case and the guidelines, federal regulations offer states "greater flexibility."

Issues pertinent to the advancement of Hispanic interests in vocational education include: (1) program access, (2) language used as the instrument of instruction, (3) the link with industry, (4) Hispanic representation at all administrative levels, and (5) counseling. The following subsections describe each of these issues, identify relevant regulations, and provide suggestions for improving Hispanic participation.

B. Program Access

Access, as Pullias indicated, is not accomplished by opening a door and waiting for the motivated to arrive. It means having a clearly defined recruitment plan that reaches the constituents in their milieu (church, bars, clubs, door-to-door, etc.). In order to provide proper services, schools need to be extensions of the community they serve -- and then to serve as a bridge to the larger community. School programs should be located in the communities they serve -- or at least be safely accessible by public transportation.

Regulations: The regulations address only questions of access for women. All legislation, however, must abide by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and its implementing regulations (45 CFR, Part 80). The General Education Provisions Regulations (GEPR) 45, CFR 100b.252, directly apply to vocational education. Equal access is clearly a condition of the Adams remedies.

Suggestions: The regulations should require that programs be designed in such a way to make vocational education accessible to LEP persons, including specification of methods for recruitment and retention. Programs should: (1) develop entry criteria which reflect an understanding of the population they are to serve, (2) demonstrate knowledge of career counseling and other services which can offer assistance that cannot be provided by the program, (3) use community-based groups as outreach and recruitment arms, (4) offer satellite programs at community-based agencies in order to reach a greater number of people, or arrange for free transportation, (5) enforce equal employment opportunity (EEO) mandates and coordinate inter-agency agreements among bilingual, English as a Second Language (ESL), counseling and vocational programs, (6) employ staff who communicate with students and have the capacity to follow up with students who seem to "drop out", (7) offer LEP students a clear picture of what the program can and cannot accomplish and what is expected of them. The regulations should be changed to assure that this understanding is built into the planning and implementation procedures.

C. Language

Over 20 U.S. Department of Education programs have had mandates to serve LEP populations in the absence of a uniform definition of bilingual education and/or national policy that addresses the circumstances under which use of the native language in programs is appropriate or inappropriate. Two offices charged with implementing vocational education legislation were the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA), U.S. Department of Education and the Office of Civil Rights, Department of

Education. Former Secretary of Education Shirley Hufstedler assigned the task of program coordination to OBEMLA without clearly defining the office's role. Inter-office or inter-departmental coordination was made difficult by the autonomy of each office. Likewise, OCR was given responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the guidelines without having sanction power over any other office.

On a programmatic level, many vocational programs demand a high level of English language proficiency before students may enter. They refer students to English as a Second Language (ESL) or Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs, where it may take several years before the necessary level of proficiency is reached. These adults need job-related skills immediately and cannot defer working until they learn school-related English, which results in a higher student drop-out rate. Language learning is further impeded when LEP students are grouped together regardless of differences in their educational background, English proficiency, and work skills and experience.

Due to the lack of federal policy, language programs often are not designed to meet the specific needs of students. There are native language programs which do not adequately stress English development, and there are English programs that do not include any native language support.

Regulations: The regulations do not protect the educational rights of the LEP population in vocational education programs. Instead, there is a separate Bilingual Vocational Education Program (BVEP). Instruction in the program is directly related to the real work world, and the training course offers native language reinforcement so that concepts are understood. Behavioral skills that are considered necessary for success in the job market are also emphasized.

However, federal regulations for the BVEP are minimal. The federal government has never indicated whether BVEP is to be considered a research and demonstration program or a full-fledged program that should receive increased funding. While the regulations clearly state that the program is for those who cannot function in the educational environment in English, and that native language is used as a mode of instruction, a recent Los Angeles Times announcement by the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) Dental School Program stated that in order to be admitted to the Bilingual Vocational Training Program, potential students had to be proficient and able to perform all work in English. Native language is not used in that program, yet it receives federal funds.

Suggestions: The federal government should define bilingual education, evaluate the efficacy of existing programs, and ensure that states clearly understand their obligation to serve LEP persons with proper services. Regulations should be implemented for BVEP, and its status should be clarified. Since its funding has never exceeded $4.8 million per year, it should be clearly identified as a demonstration program and used to generate information on what approaches work under what conditions and types of services best meet LEP population needs. Programs which do not meet BVEP guidelines should be terminated and exemplary programs recognized. Use of community-based groups as program operators should be encouraged.

D. Federal Funding

Closely related to the language problem is the amount of funds available for serving the LEP population. The scant amount of money that is currently available is a result of the conservative interpretation of the 1977

regulations by the former Commissioner of Education.

Regulations: The regulations read as follows:

> At least 10% of the state's allotment under Section 102(a) of the Act is to be used to pay up to 50% of the costs of special programs, services and activities for the handicapped. At least 20% of the state allotment under Section 102(a) of the Act is to be used to pay up to 50% of the costs of special programs, services and activities for the disadvantaged, for persons with limited English-speaking ability and stipends for students with acute economic needs which cannot be met under other programs (104.313).

The regulations do not mention the LEP community under "Programs of National Significance" in other priority areas for discretionary funding. Read carefully, the 20% allotment for the disadvantaged can be interpreted in two ways: 20% of the state's total allotment, which would give LEP's a considerable set-aside, or 20% of the allotment based on the number of eligible youth between the ages of 15 and 24, which is a small proportion of the funds. When asked to clarify this point, the Commissioner stated that he was using the second interpretation, which results in small set-asides.

Suggestions: Policies regarding funding should reflect need. There must be funding for special services to LEP populations including those who simply need English language skills and counseling to go along with vocational training and those who need basic courses as well. Especially important is funding for bilingual aides or other supplementary services that would make "mainstream" vocational education programs accessible for LEP persons. The federal government should demonstrate its understanding of the needs of this growing group both in program design and in the amount of funds that are appropriated.

E. Links with Industry

McGroarty and Grubb as well as others have addressed the importance of linking vocational programs with industry. Many students are trained without regard to the changing demand in the job market. McGroarty indicated that Hispanics have not had the benefits of high quality job-related training or on-the-job training. Bilingual Vocational Training Programs, for example, have been totally out of touch with the job market. McGroarty reported:

> The occupations selected for training are also important. In these bilingual projects, Spanish speakers are being trained to be medical clerks, dental workers, banking assistants, cooks, maintenance persons and emergency medical technicans. Presumably these projects have been funded because they offer training "vital to both the persons and the economy," as specified in federal regulations (45 CFR Part 103a). However, it is startling to compare these occupations with the list of projected employment needs from 1970 through 1985 in the ten highest and ten lowest paid occupations. The ten lowest paid occupations include cooks, health aides, and nurse's aides, all areas which encourage the development of paraprofessional roles in "mental and physical health, crime prevention and corrections, welfare, education and municipal services" (45 CFR Part 104.705a)...although many of these occupations are relatively poorly paid.30

The occupational fields chosen by the Bilingual Vocational Training Program tend to be those which offer Hispanic trainees the least options and the lowest paid jobs. Thus Hispanics will make few economic gains by participating in this program.

Regulations: The regulations offer little guidance in this area. There is not an agency or individual responsible for overseeing the types of programs that receive funds or the extent to which priorities are being followed or industry linkages established.

Suggestions: Only those programs closely linked to business and industry should be funded. Special credit should be given to proposals which focus on

jobs offering mobility and a career ladder. Programs should: (1) target jobs which are expanding, (2) offer special opportunities for bilingual personnel, (3) offer opportunities for career development, on-the-job training, or further training, (4) increase access to traditional post-secondary programs, and (5) be accountable (i.e., ensure that a student can get a job in the field for which he/she is trained and that the jobs require special training). This will prevent programs from claiming success when students are getting entry level job.

F. Hispanic Representation at Staff and Policy Levels

Hispanic and other minority representation in staff and policy positions reminds the public of the target community to be served and helps assuring high quality services. A preliminary survey conducted by the Office of Civil Rights in 1979 found that Hispanics were severely underrepresented not only as enrollees, but also as staff and policy-makers of vocational education programs. Hispanics accounted for less than 2% of the full-time vocational education staff (which included 180,527 employees), and 1.4% of the supervisory positions, Hispanics composed 3.1% of the members of State Advisory Councils. Representation at other state levels was minimal, with significant representation only in the areas of business and office occupations (one person, 4%) and, trade and industrial occupations (one person, 3.3%). Representation of Hispanics in such capacities as state director, sex equity coordinator, executive director, and director of other occupational clusters was virtually non-existent.31 Table A indicates the dearth of Hispanic staff in each program area:

TABLE 4

HISPANIC EMPLOYMENT IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Program	Percent Hispanic
Agriculture	0.9
Distribution	1.4
Health	1.2
Consumer and Homemaking	1.4
Occupational Home Economics	1.4
Office	1.4
Technical	1.5
Trade and Industry	2.1

Regulations: A minimal amount of Hispanic participation is ensured at the staff and policy level due to particular requirements in the regulations. State Councils must include representatives of at least 20 designated interests, including those related to sex, race, ethnicity and geography. Ethnicity and language, however, are not included in the 20 categories for membership in state and local boards. In addition, the regulations do not specify methods of increasing the employment of minority groups, in vocational education programs. Each state board is required to evaluate programs for limited English speakers.

Suggestions: The proportion of Hispanic personnel should be increased at the policy, program, and evaluation levels in order to design more programs relevant to Hispanics' interests. California Circuit Court Judge Joan Dempsey Klein recently noted that the inclusion of minorities and women reminds others to be more sensitive to their particular needs.[32] Hispanic recruitment efforts should be intensified by improving communication with the Hispanic community. Little progress can be made as long as staff and policy-makers are oblivious to minority needs.

G. Counselling

It is not unusual to find a counselor speaking English to a student who cannot understand English. There are two important aspects of educating the LEP population: personal contact and the ability to communicate and understand substantive information. These cannot be achieved if the counselor cannot communicate with LEP participants. The counselor often serves as a bridge to the American society — a person who articulates cultural patterns and expectations. In order to accomplish this, the counselor needs to understand both the language and the culture of the student.

Research also indicates that the disadvantaged are often counseled in such a way as to lower expectations; they are told to "be realistic" and not to expect too much. These stories are common in the Hispanic community and contribute to pushing students out before they have job-related skills.

Regulations: The regulations state that funds must be set aside for the guidance and counseling of persons with limited English-speaking ability, but the needs of this population are not defined.

Suggestions: Comprehensive programs are needed that include the necessary components to provide consistent, high quality education. Use of

community-based groups to provide counseling services should be encouraged. Specific services include: (1) high quality instruction in basic and job-related skills, (2) counseling in the primary language of the student that includes cross-cultural and job-related information, (3) job-related counseling, (4) direct opportunities to work in the work world, and (5) on-the-job support services and language services. The goals of a vocational program should be to produce a work force that is competent, has a strong sense of self-esteem, has English-speaking ability, has social skills necessary for surviving in the work world, and has the ability to look for and make decisions to further career development. Native language skills should be nurtured, and jobs in which these skills can be used may sometimes be found. The program fails if it places students in jobs they could have achieved without the benefit of the program.

VII. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Summary

The socio-demographic characteristics of Hispanics and the barriers which prevent them from utilizing vocational education services indicate a great need for vocational education programs which target these particular problems. McGroarty has emphasized this:

> ...the patterns of geographic, occupational and political concentration, the significant within-group differences and the uncertain relationship between training and employment for minority groups have affected the types of vocational training available to Hispanics, and all must be considered in improving the federal effort.[33]

The history of vocational education and the track record of current programs reveals that Hispanics have too often been excluded from the system

or tracked into training leading to low-paying, dead-end positions. Even programs specifically designed to serve Hispanics and others with limited English proficiency have pushed them into training that directs them into low-paying positions with minimal upward mobility.

There are many issues specific to Hispanics (e.g., language) that must be addressed if this situation is to be remedied. Program planners must also direct services to the English-speaking Hispanic who may have limited education or have limited experience in the job market.

Previous suggestions indicated the kinds of specific policy changes needed to assure Hispanic participation at all levels of the vocational education process. Major recommendations include the following:

- An increase percentage of federal funds should be set aside for Hispanics who need vocational education. This allocation should include support for research and evaluation;
- Future research and program efforts should focus on replicating and building on successful programs. Models for the development and evaluation of comprehensive bilingual programs for Hispanic employment and training should be developed;
- New recruitment and outreach strategies should be designed to increase the number of Hispanic enrollees in vocational education programs as well as the number of Hispanic professionals at all levels of program operation and administration;
- One means of increasing Hispanic and LEP participation in vocational education programs is to increase the role of community-based organizations as outreach and recruitment entities, program operators, and counseling and supportive service components. Community-based groups as partners and service deliverers should be mandated and encouraged by both federal and state agencies;
- The federal process of writing regulations should be simplified to facilitate state and local compliance, eradicate current inconsistencies in the law, and mandate greater participation by groups such as Hispanics and LEP persons.

- Stronger civil rights enforcement by federal and state governments is required, to assure Hispanic access to and participation in vocational education programs;

- The government should address the problem of discrimination in the training and employment process for Hispanics. Evidence shows that even English-proficient Hispanics remain in low-skilled, poorly paid jobs and are tracked into educational programs which may be unresponsive to their needs or have a negative impact on their job experience;

- The bond between vocational education programs must be strengthened, with private sector partnerships used to assure that vocational education keeps pace with new technology and prepares participants for existing jobs in today's labor markets.

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